

Mission:

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.

**Rick Scott**

Governor

John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS

State Surgeon General & Secretary

Vision: To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

September 16 2013

Judith Tear, Public Information Officer

352-527-0068 ext 271

Lecanto- The Florida Department of Health in Citrus County has seen a rise in occurrences of scabies cases. It is important that people are aware of the signs, symptoms, spread and treatment for human scabies.

Scabies is a common condition found worldwide; it affects people of all races and social classes. Scabies can spread easily under crowded conditions where close body and skin contact is common. Community places such as nursing homes, extended-care facilities, daycares and schools are often sites of scabies occurrences.

The most common symptoms of scabies, itching and a skin rash are caused by sensitization (a type of "allergic" reaction) to the parasite. The itching and rash each may affect much of the body or be limited to common sites such as the wrist, elbow, armpit, webbing between the fingers, nipple, penis, waist, belt-line, and buttocks. The rash also can include tiny blisters and scales. The head, face, neck, palms, and soles often are involved in infants and very young children, but usually not adults and older children.

Diagnosis of a scabies infestation usually is made based upon the customary appearance and distribution of the rash and the presence of burrows.

Products used to treat scabies are called *scabicides* because they kill scabies mites; some also kill eggs. Scabicides to treat human scabies are available only with a doctor's prescription; no "over-the-counter" (non-prescription) products have been tested and approved for humans.

Always follow carefully the instructions provided by the doctor and pharmacist, as well as those contained in the box or printed on the label. When treating adults and older children, scabicide cream or lotion is applied to all areas of the body from the neck down to the feet and toes; when treating infants and young children, the cream or lotion also is applied to the head and neck. The medication should be left on the body for the recommended time before it is washed off. Clean clothes should be worn after treatment.

In addition to the infested person, treatment also is recommended for household members and sexual contacts, particularly those who have had prolonged skin-to-skin contact with the infested person. All persons should be treated at the same time in order to prevent reinfestation. Retreatment may be necessary if itching continues more than 2-4 weeks after treatment or if new burrows or rash continue to appear.

Never use a scabicide intended for veterinary or agricultural use to treat humans!

Crusted scabies is a severe form of scabies that can occur in some persons who have a weak immune system, elderly, disabled, or debilitated. It is also called Norwegian scabies. Persons with crusted scabies have thick crusts of skin that contain large numbers of scabies mites and eggs. Persons with crusted scabies are very contagious to other persons and can spread the infestation easily both by direct skin-to-skin contact and by contamination of items such as their clothing, bedding,

and furniture. Persons with crusted scabies may not show the usually signs and symptoms of scabies such as the characteristic rash or itching (pruritus). Persons with crusted scabies should receive quick and aggressive medical treatment for their infestation to prevent outbreaks of scabies

Animals do not spread human scabies. Pets can become infested with a different kind of scabies mite that does not survive or reproduce on humans but causes "mange" in animals. If an animal with "mange" has close contact with a person, the animal mite can get under the person's skin and cause temporary itching and skin irritation. However, the animal mite cannot reproduce on a person and will die on its own in a couple of days. Although the person does not need to be treated, the animal should be treated because its mites can continue to burrow into the person's skin and cause symptoms until the animal has been treated successfully.

In the event that someone has a rash that does not go away please see your primary care provider.

Please refer to following links for further details from the CDC website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/disease.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/scabies/prevent.html>

For further information please contact the Florida Department of Health in Citrus County, at 352-527-0068 ext 283.

###